



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Sanitize Cooking and Eating Utensils After a Flood

- Discard any items made of porous material, such as wood, plastic, or rubber. Any dishes with deep cracks should be thrown away as well. These items cannot be sanitized.
- Wash salvageable items in a hot detergent solution, using a brush, if necessary, to remove dirt.
- If handles from frying pans and saucepans are removable, clean them separately. Equipment that can be taken apart should be cleaned in pieces.
- After thoroughly washing dishes and other glass items, rinse them in clear hot water. Then immerse them in a chlorine solution to sanitize. Use a solution of 2 tablespoons of liquid household bleach to 1 gallon of water.
- Disinfect silverware, metal utensils, pots, and pans by boiling them in water for 10 minutes. Chlorine bleach should not be used in this case because it reacts with many metals and causes them to darken.
- Let all items air-dry. Do not dry them with a dishtowel.
- If cupboards and food preparation surfaces were in contact with floodwater, clean and sanitize them before storing the clean dishes, pots, and pans.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Iowa State Extension Service and the resource material developed by the University of Wisconsin-Extension Service entitled "The Disaster Handbook for Extension Agents"